

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 JIDDA 07206 081114Z

10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05

RSC-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01 OMB-01 CEA-01

CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01 /074 W

----- 124065

R 080850Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9500

INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 7206

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, PINR, SA, US

SUBJECT: EVALUATION OF NEW GOVERNOR OF SAMA

BEGIN SUMMARY: NEW GOVERNOR OF SAMA, ABDUL AZIZ QURAYSHI IS LOGICAL COMPROMISE CANDIDATE OF TECHNICIAN MINISTERS AND IS EXPECTED TO BE MORE MODERN IF LESS AUTHORITATIVE THAN HIS PREDECESSOR. HE WILL REMAIN RESIDENT IN RIYADH, COMMUTING TO THE AGENCY IN JIDDA EACH WEEK UNTIL AT LEAST NEXT JUNE. NEW BIOGRAPHICAL DATA IS INCLUDED. END SUMMARY

1. THE NEW GOVERNOR OF THE SAUDI ARABIA MONETARY AGENCY, ABDUL AZIZ IBN ZAHID AL QURAYSHI HAS LOST NO TIME IN TAKING CHARGE OF HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES. HOWEVER, HE IS NOT PLANNING TO MOVE PERMANENTLY TO JIDDA UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR. HIS FAMILY WILL REMAIN IN RIYADH IN HIS NEW HOME AND HE WILL BE LIVING WITH HIS BROTHER, AN IMPORTANT JIDDA BUSINESSMAN. IT IS LIKELY THAT ON WEEKENDS QURAYSHI WILL RETURN TO RIYADH TO BE WITH HIS FAMILY, AND THIS DECISION TO KEEP HIS FAMILY IN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 JIDDA 07206 081114Z

THE CAPITAL WILL AFFECT BOTH THE DEGREE OF COORDINATION

POSSIBLE WITH THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE NUMBER OF VISITORS WHO MAY HAVE TO GO TO RIYADH INSTEAD OF JIDDA TO SEE THE NEW GOVERNOR.

2. QURAYSHI WAS NOT ONE OF THE LEADING RUMOURED CANDIDATES FOR THE POSITION. NO SAUDI WITH WHOM WE TALKED AND NO BANKER HAD MENTIONED HIS NAME. HOWEVER, WE MUST ADMIT THAT HE FITS THE PROFILE OF THE KIND OF PERSON WHICH THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, PRINCE MU'SAID AND HIS CHIEF ASSISTANT, MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE MOHAMMED ABA AL-KHAYL, MIGHT HAVE DRAWN IF THEY WANTED SOMEONE WHO COULD BE CLOSE TO THEM, REASONABLY EFFICIENT, AND WOULD DEFER TO THEIR FINAL JUDGMENT. HE WILL NOT HAVE THE AUTHORITATIVE POSITION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL BANKING COMMUNITY NOR WITH THE KING THAT HIS EXTRADORDINARY PREDECESSOR HAD. SOME NON-SAUDIS SPECULATE THAT QURAYSHI'S APPOINTMENT COULD BE INTERPRETED AS A SLAP AGAINST THE AL-GAHD SUDAYRI SEVEN OLIGARCHY WHO ADMINISTRATIVELY RULE THE KINGDOM. THEY REASON THAT QURAYSHI IS BEING GIVEN NEW RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH WILL GIVE HIM DIRECT POWERS WHERE BEFORE HE WAS DEPENDENT ON HIS GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH AND SUPPORT BY PRINCE FAHD AND PRINCE SULTAN AS A MEMBER OF THE NON-ROYAL MINISTERIAL PLANNING COUNCIL. OTHERS SPECULATE (AND WE AGREE WITH THIS INTERPRETATION) THAT THE APPOINTMENT IS AN INDICATION OF THE RISING STAR OF TECHNICAL MINISTERS WHO (ASIDE FROM MINISTER OF PETROLEUM YAMANI); NOW INCLUDE CENTRAL PLANNING PRESIDENT, HISHAM NAZER; DEP. MIN. FINANCE ABA AL-KHAYL; AND QURAYSHI HIMSELF.

3. THERE ARE LIMITED ROLES FOR IMPORTANT NON-ROYAL SAUDIS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA. THE OPENING OF THE POST OF GOVERNOR OF SAMA TO A SAUDI, AS PREDICTED WOULD HAPPEN AFTER GOVERNOR ALI'S DEATH, MEANT THAT A KEY NEW POSITION WAS AVAILABLE TO BE FILLED BY A NON-ROYAL CANDIDATE. QURAYSHI WAS A GOOD CHOICE SINCE HE IS HONEST, A RELATIVELY COMPETENT ADMINISTRATOR, AND TRUSTED BY EVERYONE. HE IS LESS CONTROVERSIAL THAN HISHAM NAZER WITH A SWEETER CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 JIDDA 07206 081114Z

PERSONALITY, HIS ENGLISH IS EXCELLENT, AND HE HAS GREAT PRESENCE. HE RATES HIGHLY ON THE DIPLOMATIC SCALE, AND IF THERE IS ANY DEFECT IN HIM, IT WOULD PROBABLY BE IN BEING UNWILLING TO MAKE ANY TOUGH DECISIONS ON HIS OWN. ALTHOUGH HE HAS NO EXPERIENCE IN FINANCE, HE IS A QUICK LEARNER. AS NEW ADVISORS TO SAMA HE WILL HAVE THE EX-GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND, LORD O'BRIAN, AND A 5-MAN TEAM FROM WHITE WELD, NEW YORK, AND BARINGS OF LONDON.

4. FURTHER BIOGRAPHIC DATA TO THAT ALREADY AVAILABLE
IN WASHINGTON IS PROVIDED AS FOLLOWS:

ABDUL AZIZ AL-QURAYSHI IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN BORN IN AL HASA IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE, WAS EDUCATED AT A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN IRAQ, GOINT ON TO TAKE A BS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AT CAIRO UNIVERSITY AND AN MBA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA IN 1961. HE IS THE SON OF ZAYAD AL-QURAYSHI, WHO WAS A WELL-KNOWN TRADITIONAL BUSINESSMAN IN CIGARETTES, OTHER IMPORTS, AND REAL ESTATE. THE FAMILY BUSINESS IS CARRIED ON BY HIS BROTHER, WHO IS RESIDENT IN JIDDA. UPON ABDUL AZIZ QURAYSHI'S RETURN TO THE KINGDOM FROM AMERICA HE BECAME GENERAL MANAGER OF THE 350-MILE SAUDI RAILROAD SYSTEM AND RAN DAMMAM PORT. HE STILL TAKES CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EASTERN PROVINCE. HE BECAME PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRAL PERSONNEL BUREAU IN THE LATE 1960S AND WAS NAMED MINISTER OF STATE AS HEAD OF THE BUREAU IN 1973. HE HAS BEEN USED AS A TROUBLE SHOOTER ON SEVERAL DIFFERENT PROBLEM AREAS, INCLUDING BECOMING GENERAL SUPERVISOR OF GAS (PROPANE) DISTRIBUTION IN SAUDI ARABIA DURING THE SHORTAGE LAST YEAR. HE HAS ACTED AS MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

5. THE ECONOMIC COUNSELOR HAS KNOWN ABDUL AZIZ FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS AND RECENTLY WAS IMPRESSED BY HOW REMARKABLY SENSITIZED HE HAS BECOME TO THE PALESTINE QUESTION AND TO THE NEED FOR SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. HE STATED IN PERSONAL CONVERSATIONS EARLIER THIS YEAR THAT EVERYTHING DEPENDED ON SUCH A SETTLEMENT INCLUDING COOPERATION ON THE ARAB STATES USE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 JIDDA 07206 081114Z

OF THEIR SURPLUR FUNDS. HE IS HOWEVER, HIGHLY PRO-AMERICAN IN ORIENTATION. HE IS MARRIED WITH TWO CHILDREN AND HIS WIFE IS THE DAUGHTER OF ABDUL AZIZ AL-TURKI, CULTURAL ATTACHE IN LONDON. HE IS TRADITIONAL IN OUTLOOK, DRINKS VERY SPARINGLY, AND HAS A VERY QUIET PERSONALITY BUT DOES ATTEND WESTERN PARTIES.
AKINS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974JIDDA07206
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740356-0373
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741251/aaaabrxi.tel
Line Count: 161
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 MAY 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <25 MAR 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EVALUATION OF NEW GOVERNOR OF SAMA BEGIN SUMMARY: NEW GOVERNOR OF SAMA, ABDUL AZIZ QURAYSHI
TAGS: EFIN, PINR, SA, US, (QURAYSHI, ABDUL AZIZ)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005